

For Your Consideration: Mermaids Are the New Vampires

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This past weekend, 3.5 million people tuned into [Animal Planet's *Mermaids: The New Evidence*](#) and discovered that mermaids might just be real. (Note: They're not real.) It's the second time the network has dipped into these waters: *Mermaids: The Body Found* aired on Animal Planet just last year (and also got record ratings.) So even if mermaids aren't real (note: they're not), that doesn't mean they can't be interesting dramatically. [Vampires are over, sexy wolf-dudes had their time](#), and it doesn't seem [that angel prediction is going to stick](#). It's peak time for mermaids to shine. Here are six reasons why:

1. Mermaids are sexy.

They are! Waist up, this is obvious. Traditionally dressed (or undressed?) with a permanent shell-bra, the mermaid style fits perfectly into the crop-top trend of today — bellybuttons bared with no sign of a piercing. (That wouldn't really fly anyway, what with all the swimming around and possible catching of belly rings on seaweed, etc.) Endless mermaid hair never quite goes out of style, and a drug store's summertime display of beauty products reveals our obsession with beach-tousled locks. They're also sexy in that they are forever mysterious. Bennett Madison, whose new book [September Girls](#) is a story of a boy who gets entangled in a world of mermaids, notes: "They're almost always sexy. How could they not be when they spend so much time lying around topless in the sun? But it's tough to be a mermaid too. In mythology, a mermaid's sexuality is almost always a weapon. Sometimes it's used against men; other times it's turned against the mermaid herself."

2. Mermaids are relatable.

It's right there in the classification: Mermaids are half human. And not creepy, undead, extra-pale-like-sculpted-porcelain humans; living, breathing (underwater) humans. They wear uncomfortable bras. They struggle with bad hair days. They wake up every day hoping to be accepted by society. We see ourselves in the mermaid, because the mermaid is half us.

3. Mermaids always have daddy issues.

Speaking of sexy, is there anything sexier than daddy issues? (No!) Well, guess what? All mermaids have daddy issues. That's one of their things. As determined by Greek myth (and *The Little Mermaid*) all merpeople are the sons and daughters of Poseidon (or "Father Neptune," if you're Roman). And Poseidon wasn't just a father, he was often a single father. While Poseidon historically did have a wife, sea-goddess Amphitrite, she was not actually a merperson and is often denoted by poets to just represent "the sea." Therefore, all mermaids are technically

motherless and beholden to the whim of their controlling father: the King of the Sea. Madison agrees: “The difference is that these girls mostly know the score, and they’re definitely pissed off about it. They’re trying to find a way to break out of the story, but taking down the patriarchy (in the form of an angry, jealous sea-god daddy) isn’t exactly easy.” Such dramatic possibilities.

4. Mermaids live in the ocean, and the ocean is cool.

You’ve seen one space blockbuster, you’ve seen them all. Aliens! Strange eyebrows! A low-oxygen warning at a crucial moment! We get it. What we do *not* get enough of at the movies is the ocean, which has whales, sharks, dolphins, jellyfish, scary deep chasms, reefs, tides, and the necklace from *Titanic* (it’s still waiting). Also, yes, a lack of oxygen at crucial moments. Anything can happen down there.

5. Mermaids have remarkable scientific possibilities.

Most mermaid mythology is incredibly old, meaning that we have a lot of room to invent strange and wacky scientific explanations for the existence of mermaids (and mermen, for that matter. It is time to free the mermen; they have been villains for too long). For example: How do mermaids have sex without obvious genitalia? Where are their reproductive organs hiding? They must be *somewhere* cool, right? (Please note: mermaids can only be the new vampires if the mermaids are also able to have crazy sex. We are reinventing here.)

6. If mermaids make a comeback, a live-action *The Little Mermaid* reboot is all but guaranteed.

Would you say no to that? Exactly.